8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RH1 Caucasia RH1

In our exposition of the various marriage impediments we have also described the institution called *atalyk* (*supra*, p. 57). The upper classes especially used to give their children over to foster-parents whose task it was to teach them all these things.

§ 8. PARENTAL OBLIGATION OF SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN

In patrilineal societies in which the perpetuation of the family is the greatest obligation of the individual and of the family as a whole, there is no danger that the boy will suffer any bodily need, food, clothing, shelter, unless absolutely unavoidable. But even girls are well taken care of. Even before Islamic law gave the Caucasian woman a right to a small part of the inheritance, which the *adats* excluded, female members of the family were always well provided for. After the death of the father, his obligation passed on to the oldest brother till all the sisters were married.[102] If the girl happens not to have any brothers, the obligation of support passes on to the nephews,[103] or to other relatives.

§ 9. PARENTAL AFFECTION FOR OFFSPRING

Much has been written about the lack of affection of North Caucasian parents for their children. In most cases, however, the authors fail to grasp the real psychology behind what seems extreme coldness and lack of parental affection. Reineggs, for example, who has given us one of the first reliable accounts of Caucasian customs, is not free from this very misunderstanding. He writes: "Er pflanzt sich tierisch fort, ohne Liebe zu kennen; er betrachtet sein Weib und seine Kinder als einen Teil seines Vermögens; er zählt sie zu seinen Herden, und bleibt, da er nur für körperliches Gefühl reizbar ist, gegen sittliche, empfundene Erfahrungen, gefällige Gunstbezeugungen ungerührt und in gleichgültiger Zufriedenheit."[104] In other words, Reineggs failed to distinguish between loving someone and manifesting this love *externally and publicly*.

The NORTHWESTERN CAUCASIANS. Longworth, speaking about the Cherkess of about a century ago, made this very distinction. He says that the father "is forbidden the slightest manifestation of tenderness" not only for his wife but also his children.[105] He does not deny the existence of tenderness but only its exteriorization and manifestation.

The NORTHEASTERN CAUCASIANS. Grabovskij mentions that an Ingush not only considers it a disgrace to carry his child in his arms or to fondle it but that he is forbidden even to mention its name before others.[106] Baddeley gives us a very fine example of how really degrading the Lesghians consider it to take their own children in their arms. "A fellow villager, Boulat-khan, had brought on himself the contempt of the men of Andee by publicly carrying his little son in his arms, a manifestation of affection so indecorous in native eyes as to imply

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[102] Leontovič, II, p. 246, § 107; II, p. 97. Berže, Čečnja i Čečency, p. 97.
[103] Leontovič, II, p. 177, § 178 (in regard to the Ingushi).
[104] Reineggs, *Allgemeine hist.-topograph. Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, Vorrede, p. viii.
[105] *A Year among the Circassians*, I, p. 285.
[106] "Inguši, ich žizn i obyčaj," SSKG, IX (1876), p. 49.

855 & 593 total want of manliness. On one occasion, stung by the jeers of the men in his native regiment, he drew his 'kinjal' and crying: 'I love my son, but you shall see also that I don't mind killing him', was about to do so when they seized his arm and succeeded in calming him."[107] A better example to illustrate the necessary distinction between love and public manifestation of that love we can hardly offer. "I love my son, but you shall see also that I don't mind killing him!" A paradox which a Western mind finds very difficult to grasp![108]

The neighbouring SOUTHERN CAUCASIANS, the Khevsurs, have the same taboo. A father may never carry his child before others or even say a friendly word to it. The most that the father may do is hold the child by hand when it is old enough to walk.[109a]

The neighbouring OSSETES observe the same rule. Here too it is not a lack of affection but a convention, which under no condition may be violated. "Neither husband nor wife might take their children in their arms, or by hand, or give them anything, in the presence of older members of his family. 'So far is this carried,' said Ourousbi [the Author's guide, an Ossete] 'that once one of my children fell into the water and might have been drowned, but as older men of the family were present I did not dare to call attention to the fact, much less take the child out of the water myself. Luckily one of them saw what was happening and saved it.'"[109] "So, too, Kosta Khetagouroff, the Ossetine poet, saved a child from falling off a high house-roof by stamping on its garments, but called a woman to pick it up as it would have been against custom for him to do so; and one of the Abayeffs, having in identical circumstances saved a child, called to its mother—his own wife—'Here, come and pick up your puppy!' (Cursin, *Osetini*, p. 40)." Baddeley claims that in this respect a change has taken place, and as proof, points out that in several of his own photographs Ourousbi is seen carrying a friend's baby. But here Baddeley forgets that the prohibition is not to carry a *friend's* baby but to carry *one's own* child.

§ 10. CONCLUSIONS

842 & 628 We have already mentioned the main reason why boys are preferred to girls, namely the patriarchal, patrilocal, and patrilineal structure of the North Caucasian and neighbouring societies. But there is still another reason, based on intertribal relations and on the poverty of the mountain tribes, which leads them to a life of raids and robbery. The Caucasus is a typical land of blood-feuds. In the Terek Province, for example, with a population of about 930,000, there were in one year 365 cases of homicide or attempted homicide, an average of one a day. Feuds accounted for most of them.[110] The rest were the result

[107] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 87 f.

[108] Cf. Dubrovin, I, i, p. 440.

[109a] Hahn, *Bilder aus dem Kaukasus*, p. 81. For the practice in the Government of Elizabethpol, see E. Melik-Sachnazarov, "Selenie Arcevanik, Zangezurskago uězda, Elisavetpol'skoj Gubernii," SMOMPK, XXV (1898), No. 2, p. 43.

[109] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 269, from whom we borrow also the following citation of Cursin.

[110] Baddeley, *op. cit.*, I, p. 81.